



Williamstown Council on Aging

**Harper Center Bulletin
#200**

July 1st 2011

Harper Center Bulletin

July 2011 Newsletter

So here we are in July and the heat will be rising all month long. Well, at least we think it will. This is the traditional vacation month for many of us, heading out to the beaches and sun and fun. And of course some of us will be seeing our summer friends- folks who spend some other less warm season- we won't mention it here- in warmer climes. Anyway, summer is officially here and that means we operate in summer mode-stay out of the heat of the day, drink plenty of fluids and definitely drink before you're thirsty as we don't want to run the risk of dehydration. Wear your sunscreen!!! You know the drill. We've been doing it for how long now?



All right then, moving on...We had our official Volunteer Recognition Day last week and I would like to extend a final thank you to all those who supported the Council on Aging last year by coming in here and freely giving their time to help make the programs here in the Harper Center work. I have said it before and I will say it again-without our volunteers, our programs would be severely diminished. We're looking forward to another great year here and newer and different program options coming along too. And yes, we'll be adding some new faces here in July as well...be ready to meet and greet!

So Happy Fourth of July everyone!

In July, The Friendship Club supports...

The local food pantry will once more be the focus of giving for the Friendship Club of Williamstown and really folks, you cannot get a more worthy group to support. We humans simply cannot thrive without food and good nutrition is the primary fuel which keeps us going. Here in Williamstown, we are so fortunate to have this available to those who will need it. The difference between being food secure and in trouble can be very fine for some of our neighbors and, of course, there is always the potential for nasty things to happen for which an emergency food supply would come in handy. Just ask the people in Springfield if you doubt it. So, please be generous and thanks in advance!

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The Williamstown Council on Aging lives in the Harper Center at 118 Church Street in town. Our normal hours are; Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday at 11 for lunch.

You can call us at 458-8250, fax to 458-5156 or email; bogrady@williamstown.net

We've been here providing information, referral, advocacy and great services since 1966!

Five wishes...

Information on the "Five Wishes" program will be offered here at Harper on Tuesday July 5th at 12:30. We'll be offering a menu featuring spaghetti and a choice of meatballs and chicken with salad and bread at noon. Five Wishes is a program devised by a former hospice volunteer who once worked with Mother Theresa at a hospice she ran. He decided to create a mechanism wherein people can express their wishes about their care should they become sick or incapacitated in a more expanded format than the usual forms do. And filed correctly with appropriate signatures, "Five Wishes" is valid in most states including Massachusetts.



It is a simple form in a booklet format which addresses five specific areas for care; Who do you want to make decisions on your behalf? What kind of treatment do you want? How comfortable do you want to be? How would you like to be treated at the end? What specifically do you want your loved ones to know?

Of course there's more to it than that but you have to come in and eat and listen to a brief presentation. Sign up-you know where.

Welcome Marion!

A waaaaaay back in the early 1980's when the Harper Center was a new space, two women named Margaret Hart and Lois Quinn were joint directors of the COA. Long before my time. Now, here we are in 2011 and her daughter, Marion Quinn Jowett, will come to the Harper Center on July 18 to begin working as our Outreach Worker.

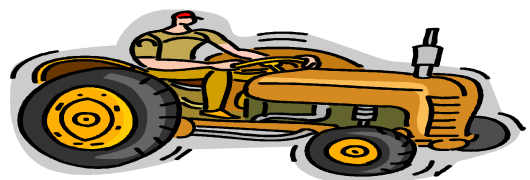


Marion was born and raised in Williamstown, is a graduate of Mt. Greylock Regional High School and attended Regis College in Weston Massachusetts. Nice town too. Interesting golf courses. But I digress. Marion is currently employed at the North Adams Adult Day Health facility and prior to that worked at Sweetbrook as a social worker and at North Adams Regional Hospital, Elder Services, etc. Marion and her family live locally and still in her home town. She knows what to do and will be here to help in a couple weeks. Stop by and say hi!

Farmers Market...

The Farmer's Market is up and running from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00p.m. every Saturday for the next couple of months down in the parking lot on the end of Spring Street. You'll find all sorts of goodies there including fresh produce, maple syrup, baked goods, cheese and handcrafts from local growers and craftsmen. It will be open rain or shine so check it out!

Now another annual tradition associated with the Farmers Market are the farmers market coupons. On Monday July 25th at 10:00, Sandy Alfonso and friends from Elder Services of Berkshire County will be here to hand out the coupons, worth \$25, to each individual who has signed up to receive the coupons ahead of time. Yes I said SIGN UP! We're keeping the list and it will be first come, first serve.



FRAUD

Oh, man, how much fraud appears in the paper lately! It seems as though someone is always making the “perp walk” to a waiting police cruiser or off into a courthouse somewhere and in fact I



know a couple of people who were the victims of identity theft and all the crap which is ultimately associated with this. Anyway, our area is not immune to this type of badness and we know it. So we thought that it might be a good idea to revisit this topic with an expert and talk about how to avoid this particular problem. On Tuesday July 19 at 12:30, Jodi Rathbun-Briggs, Assistant Vice President of Risk Management at the Greylock Federal Credit Union will be here at the Harper Center to talk with us about Identity Theft, ATM fraud, credit card fraud and elder financial abuse—and other scams that they are currently aware of and will tell us how to avoid the same. This is an important conversation folks-don't miss it!

So they'll talk at 12:30 and we'll have pizza first at noon, there will be a sign-up and you know where it will be...

Volunteers

We're looking for a few good people who would be willing to donate some of their time to possibly help some of our neighbors get around. Two crunchy issues have become apparent. First off, our own van has become increasingly busy and as a result, we periodically have to turn folks away when they call looking for a ride and the van is booked heavily elsewhere—this particularly applies to those of you who come in without scheduling in advance... Secondly, we have been notified that the Red Cross will no longer be able to transport our people to Pittsfield/BMC and this creates a potential issue for some of us.

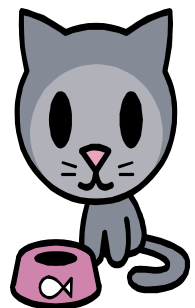
Anyway, we have some transportation gaps here and there and if we could fill them with a couple helping hands, that would be great. Yes, there is a CORI check but that's a formality. Interested? Then do let us know, 458-8250 and we'll tell you what we have in mind!



File of Life-Animal style...

Yeah, we all know about the File of Life, don't we? Those are those little plastic envelopes with the magnets and the papers to put your medical conditions and medications on? Then you affix them to your refrigerator where they'll be found by emergency medical responders or others in the event of an emergency, right? You know what I'm talking about correct? If you don't, you need to ask us here at Harper and we'll be sure to make certain that you get one. They really work-if they're kept updated that is.

Anyway, about the animals. We know that a lot of you have animals and probably would like to know that they will be cared for if something were to happen, right? So this form is designed to let emergency responders know that you have a pet, and who is to care for it while you're gone. Our local ambulance people are aware that there may be one. It's simple-you fill it out and put it in with the rest of your file info. It will be there if needed and kitty will be safe while mom or dad are away. Interested? Call us! 458-8250



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Council on Aging**

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I just don't know where June went, it flew. I hope July goes slower. There's still plenty of light and warmth to make it really cozy around here. That will be good for our garden and the plants within-yes, we did plant some tomatoes and other assorted veggies. Of course, we will be using them here in the kitchen at the Harper Center as always. And this means that we are putting everyone on the honor system; leave our garden alone!

And can you believe that this is the 200th edition of the Harper Center Bulletin! All this writing and typing and head scratching...As Phil Rizzuto used to say; Holy cow!

Page four news and notes...

Our foot care expert, Serena Merrill, will be here at Harper on Tuesday July 19th to clip those toe nails and massage those aching feet. What a treat! Anyway, she is booked solid for July and as this is written, is booking appointments for September...it's by appointment and first come first serve so act quickly!

SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be in the house on Wednesday morning, July 20th at 10:30. Peg will be able to meet and work with anyone who has issues with their health care insurance coverage. Seems like she's been a tad busy of late so appointments are recommended. She's also available for individual consultations by appointment through the office here at the Harper Center-call us at 458-8250 and we'll connect you.

The monthly Blood Pressure Clinic hosted by our friends from Interim Health care will be on July 12th, right before the Friendship Club meeting. Darlene will be here to check those vital numbers so save the date.

The Friendship Club will also be hosting their own version of Bingo on the 26th. Maybe those of you who haven't participated in their game recently will come and see us, eh?

Finally the monthly Brown Bag offering from the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is scheduled for the 22nd this month-the FOURTH FRIDAY. For those unfamiliar with Brown Bag, it's a monthly offering of shelf stable foods and fresh fruits and veggies in season. Interested? Call me at 458-8250 and we'll talk. Have a good month! Brian.

